



## LIVINGSTON JOB SERVICE EMPLOYERS COMMITTEE

Chairperson – Jim Hunt  
Recorder – Sue Hanken

Minutes of the Meeting  
Tuesday, November 18, 2008

Minutes from October stand as written.

### 1. Introduction:

Joyce read highlights from the press release announcing Stillwater Mine layoff. Enclosed is a copy of that Press Release.

Ry Timber laid off 91 people for two weeks. The company that buys the chips from RY can no longer purchase them. RY is scrambling to find a new buyer.

Stillwater will meet with employees to discuss layoffs. Job Service will participate in Rapid Response in Big Timber and Laurel.

### Tax Exempt Status 501C3:

Sue handed out copies of our JSEC bylaws for review. According to the bylaws, election of Chair and Vice Chair take place at the November meeting. Lou Ann Nelson motioned to keep Jim Hunt as our Chair and Manny Goetz as Vice Chair. Brian Sparks seconded the motion. All members present voted aye.

Livingston JSEC voted to keep financials separate from the umbrella of MSEC and declined offer to group with another 501C3. Gail motioned, Lou Ann seconded, no one opposed.

### 3. 2010 Innovation in Business Conference

Sue handed out information about the next JSEC conference to be held May 18-21, 2009. She will keep us informed of developments. One or two Livingston JSEC members may go with all expenses paid by JSEC. There is also a scholarship available for Micro Business owners, with ten or fewer employees, and less than \$500,000 in annual revenues. Please nominate someone whom would appreciate the opportunity to attend. Email Sue: shanken@mt.gov identifying the owner or designee of a Montana Micro Business who is interested in attending the this conference, the name of the business, the address, phone, and email for the nominee **by January 31, 2009.**

### **“Micro Business Scholarship**

The **Innovation in Business Conference**, sponsored by the Montana State Employer Council and Workforce Services Division, will be held May 18-21, 2009 in Helena, MT and will offer Human Resource information, Economic Development, and pertinent small business-related workshops. Scholarship will cover costs for one individual to attend, including conference fees, mileage, motel and meals.”

### 4. “How To Create A Recession Proof Marketing Plan;” Tom Egelhoff.

Members voted to move the date of the workshop up by two weeks, to January 13<sup>th</sup>. Zanya will help get a list of phone numbers and email addresses to send the workshop information. Sue will get the Chamber distribution list or email Lou Ann the information. Job Service will cover postage for some mailings. Elizabeth started a brochure and flyer for advertising. Sue edited it and sent it to Tom for his approval. Members voted to decrease the cost from \$79.00 to \$59.00 for the first person from each business attending and \$44.00 for each additional person from the same business. The \$79.00 cost included Tom’s newest book, “How To Market, Advertise, And Promote Your Business Or Service In A Small Town.” The book will still be available to purchase at the workshop. JSEC members may attend at no charge.

## 5. Business Updates

Park High: Regina provided information about the spring Business Professionals of America (BPA) event. The school needs volunteer judges for the event. She also talked about the Conrad Business barbeque for businesses scheduled for late May. She would like to host a similar event for businesses who participate in the Livingston BPA. PHS enrollment is up from last year. Last year 70 new students enrolled, this year the school is up 10 to 80 new students. They are funded for last year's smaller enrollment and have less money for this year's increase in students.

Park County: The budget passes at the County. The County eliminated the Road Supervisor position. The Commissioners will interview for the HR position, soon. Randy will step into Chris' post as Interim Commissioner in January.

A job seeker complained to one of the business owners that he was instructed by Livingston Job Service to apply in person to a job located in Bozeman that he was interested in. When he got there, all he had to do was hand in his application and he didn't receive an interview. He was discouraged by having to pay for gasoline to travel to Bozeman just to turn in an application when he can not afford the extra expense of traveling. Job Service staff said that it must have been a communication problem and that Job Service regularly mails applications to the Bozeman Job Service depending on the instructions on the job posting.

The Chamber has not received input from businesses about the ripple effect of the downturn in the economy. The Chamber fund raiser did well and it was able to sell 52 silent auction packages.

Auto companies report car sales are down. Dealership business has stopped except when someone needs a car due to an accident or broken down car. They no longer see impulse buyers. There is currently an average of 20 sales per month whereas before, the norm was an average of 65 sales a month. Service and parts sales are down. People are still using credit to pay but cards are going away. Bank of America and CitiBank stopped issuing credit cards to businesses or are lowering card limits. People are juggling credit cards too much in order to survive. Banks require money down from Dealers, now, for automobile purchases. Trade-ins are no longer accepted. It is a good time to buy, though, for customers; no down payment required from them though that may change, low interest rates, and cheaper prices on cars.

The Billings Gazette reported that one rancher was charged with starving livestock. People can not afford to feed their cattle. The Bureau of Land Management will dispose of the wild horses in their care. They can no longer afford to manage and control them.

The banks are doing okay in Livingston. Bozeman and Missoula reportedly overdeveloped so as a consequence are experiencing harder times than in Livingston. CitiGroup is seeing foreclosures. Multi family building permits are up. People see a need to supply apartments to people without a home due to foreclosures.

Building permits in Bozeman are down 65%. Housing costs have dropped 15 to 20 thousands dollars. One business owner reported that he has never made a profit in Livingston and has always had to put money back into his business, here. Out east he has made money on rentals where there is a consistent 100% occupancy in them.

Other economic woes: Discussed the Federal government bail out and how it will go to unions to pay retirements. Some are of the opinion that pension funds need to bankrupt and hospitalization plans are too expensive. One business reported dropping their benefits in wake of universal health care. Layoffs will take place so cuts are being made to avoid them; employees will have to give up benefits or take a cut in pay in order to stay on board. Employees are opting for losing benefits instead of accepting pay cuts.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 9, 2008**

